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Wang Lianming, *Jesuitenerbe in Peking: Sakralbauten und transkulturelle Räume, 1600–1800*

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Jesuitenerbe in Peking: Sakralbauten und transkulturelle Räume, 1600–1800 (hereafter *The Jesuits' Legacy*),[1] by Wang Lianming 王廉明, is a comprehensive evaluation of the Jesuit material legacy in Beijing and a welcome addition to our understanding of the global entanglements of Jesuit and Qing imperial art, architecture, and knowledge production. The author, who now holds the position of associate professor at the City University of Hong Kong, published *The Jesuits' Legacy* as a revised version of his Ph.D. dissertation which he had submitted in 2014 at Heidelberg University.[2] Wang's breadth of knowledge of both Baroque architecture and "Chinese art," which enables him to disentangle the complex histories of transmission and employment of globally circulating images and

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1 The book's title can be translated as *The Jesuits' Legacy in Beijing: Sacred Architecture and Transcultural Spaces, 1600–1800*.

2 Previous reviews of Wang's book can be found here: Irina Saladin in *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte*, bd. 40 (2021), pp. 377–379; Jacques Scheuer in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, 143:1 (2021), pp. 136–137; Rita Unfer Lukoschik in *Das achtzehnte Jahrhundert*, 45:2 (2021), pp. 302–307; D. E. Mungello in *Monumenta Serica*, 69:1 (2021), pp. 288–292; Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia in *Journal of Jesuit Studies*, vol. 8 (2021), pp. 490–500 and in *Renaissance Quarterly*, 74:4 (2021), pp. 1373–1374; Hang Lin in *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, Neue Serie, nr. 40 (2020), pp. 58–60; Niklas Leverenz in *The Burlington Magazine*, vol. 162 (2020), pp. 906–907.

architecture, makes his book a pleasure to read and allows for the discovery of long-lost transcultural spaces.

This publication focuses on the interconnections that tied three Jesuit churches in Beijing—the South Church (Nantang 南堂), the East Church (Dongtang 東堂), and the North Church (Beitang 北堂)—to Chinese and Korean literati and the Qing imperial court. Reading the three churches through the framework of transculturation which, in the words of Monica Juneja, "has worked to find a more precise and differentiated conceptual apparatus to plausibly describe and grasp the specificity and dynamics of global relationships," Wang is primarily interested in the aesthetic practices that occurred in the early modern contact zone of Beijing.[3] His book reveals the architectural ensembles' developments and deployments through an emphasis on the processes that lead to their creation as well as the role these held within the dynamic social and cultural milieus of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century China (p. 18). *The Jesuits' Legacy* is also evidence for the persuasiveness of New Qing History as an interpretative framework.[4] Especially in the later chapters, the book focuses on the use of the Jesuits' visual rhetoric by the Qing rulers. In the view of the author, these processes of transculturation helped to define Manchu identity and subjectivity vis-à-vis the subjugated Mongols, Tibetans, and others, and facilitated the visualization of Manchu rulership over a panasiatic, multicultural empire (e.g., pp. 280–281, 327–328).

3 Monica Juneja, "'A very civil idea…': Art History, Transculturation, and World-Making—With and Beyond the Nation," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte*, 81:4 (2018), p. 469. On the idea of aesthetic practices as a tool to overcome the shortcomings of Western distinctions between art and crafts, see Hannah Baader, "Epilogue: Aesthetic Practices and Transcultural Art Histories," in Sanja Savkić, et al., eds, *Culturas visuals indígenas y las practices estéticas en las Américas desde la antigüedad hasta el presente* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 2019), pp. 427–431. For a definition of the term "contact zone," see Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," *Profession* (1991), pp. 33–40; Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 4, 6.

4 For an overview over the debate of New Qing History formulated at first primarily in American scholarship, see Joanna Waley-Cohen, "The New Qing History," *Radical History Review*, issue 88 (2004), pp. 193–206.

Chapter One first describes the acquisition of three Jesuit residences in Beijing over the course of the seventeenth century. In 1605, the Jesuits acquired the grounds of the South Residence by legal means under the Wanli Emperor (r. 1573–1620). In 1655, the grounds of the East Residence were given to the Jesuits by the Shunzhi Emperor (1644–1661). Following the establishment of the Missions étrangères de Paris in 1663 and the society's conflicts with the Padroado over the rights for missionary activities abroad, Pope Clement X (r. 1670–1676) in 1673 decided that the Padroado did not have prerogatives in China and East Asia. Consequently, King Louis XIV of France (r. 1643–1715) sent French Jesuits—called the Mathématiciens du roi—to Beijing who were granted land for their Northern Residence by the Kangxi Emperor (r. 1662–1722) in 1694 (pp. 35–48). The construction of churches in these three locations became the Jesuits' priority; Johann Adam Schall von Bell (Tang Ruowang 湯若望, 1591–1666) and Ferdinand Verbiest (Nan Huairen 南懷仁, 1623–1688) played important roles in securing money and donations of construction materials from the Kangxi Emperor. An important aspect of this chapter is Wang's attention to the different points of view concerning the construction of the residences and churches. While the Jesuits portrayed imperial support as a sanction to build sacred architecture (p. 78), Wang also shows that the construction of the church at the North Residence, for example, was not part of Kangxi's plans for that area (p. 80). Rather, Kangxi envisioned the compound as a center for science to enhance the court's ability to learn Western crafts and knowledge which he, in turn, intended to use for his own means (pp. 89–92). By highlighting these two different perspectives, Wang deconstructs the Jesuits' self-mythologizing of imperial support for the construction of Christian architecture in Beijing.

In Chapter Two, Wang pursues urban and sociological aspects, showing how especially the East and the South Residence with their strategic locations became urban highlights that attracted Korean envoys and Chinese literati alike. Beijing's

urban infrastructure did not offer the same kind of Italian urban setting in which churches could have been built with their façades facing a public *piazza*. This lack forced the Jesuits to use frontal courtyards—similar to Buddhist and Confucian temple architecture—behind which the churches' facades were less impressive and awe-inspiring than in European cities. However, such an arrangement allowed them to create semi-public spaces "*infra-muros* (sic.)" for the "pagan" Christian temple with which visitors were familiar (pp. 119–120). An important aspect of the residences' appearance in the urban environment were both their height (the towers of the South Church, for example, exceeded existing imperial and bourgeois architecture) and their acoustic presence (organs and bell towers) (pp. 121–129). Wang shows that together with their display of instruments and exotica, the churches' apostolic functions played a minor role in their public perception (p. 175); rather, their status as important stages of scientific wonders suitable for the urban flaneur were of higher importance for visitors (p. 139). The second part of the chapter turns the attention to questions of legitimacy: the churches' touristic appeal was further enhanced through the public display of imperial gifts to the Jesuits. The Chongzhen Emperor (r. 1628–1644), for example, had bestowed a memorial board that recognized Schall's contributions to the calendar reform (p. 144). Granted for individual accomplishments, the board was quickly replicated by the Jesuits and sent to other churches, thus serving to publicize imperial recognition. In similar ways, the Jesuits instrumentalized other commemorative items such as archways (*pailou* 牌樓), stelae, and commemorative boards given by other emperors to imply that their churches were imperially commissioned (*chijian* 敕建) and thus state institutions (pp. 148–173).

Chapter Three, "Jesuit architecture in Beijing from a global perspective," focuses on architectural self-portrayal and identity-making in Beijing. By means of a detailed formal analysis of the enlarged and revised South Church, which serves as a case study for this chapter because of its comparatively well-documented

nature (the church was destroyed by fire in 1775), Wang shows that churches such as Il Gesù in Rome or Sant'Andrea in Mantua were "not a direct model" for it (p. 193). He pays particular attention to the design of the churches' facades and finds that the "mechanism of the Jesuits' architectural production in Beijing was not […] a direct transfer or imitation of European architectural models, but a joining of citational architectural elements […] from the territories of the Portuguese Padroado" (p. 225). The façade models that the South and East Churches in Beijing cited lay in seventeenth-century Goa, India, thus pointing to the global dimension of Jesuit architecture (pp. 226–234). In contrast, the façade of the North Church had its citational roots in seventeenth-century France. Accordingly, the chapter asks how architecture was used to bespeak a Jesuit identity and shows that the competition between different clerical orders, which brought about certain architectural characteristics that singled out Jesuit from, for example, Benedictine churches in Europe, had very little bearing on developments in Beijing, simply because the receiving audiences were different. Simply put, in Rome, Jesuit churches needed to be "Jesuit;" in Beijing, the conflicts between the Portuguese Padroado and the French Jesuit missions reinforced the desires of the involved European royal powers to use architecture for self-representational purposes (p. 207). Wang concludes: "The Jesuit churches in Beijing were representational buildings in the narrow sense which can only be understood before the background of accentuating national identities within the Society of Jesus and the fierce competition between early modern [European] royal houses" (p. 243).[5]

While chapters one and two situate the reader in Beijing and the third chapter uncovers the global nature of the capital's Jesuit architecture, the last two chapters take up the task of revealing global entanglements of Qing architecture, art, and

5 Similar arguments about competition between Europeans at the Qing court have been made elsewhere. E.g., see Susan Naquin, *Peking: Temples and City Life, 1400–1900* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 483.

knowledge with Beijing's Jesuit sacred spaces and the associated material culture. Chapter Four, "From church space to palace space: transitive moments of transcultural entanglements," situates Christian images in their actual settings, thus allowing the reader to understand specifically how and where Chinese literati encountered these foreign images (pp. 253–265). Beginning with displayed icons, Wang cites Gu Qiyuan 顧起元 (1565–1628), Sun Chengze 孫承澤 (1592–1676), and even the Wanli Emperor to show that Christian images with their illusionistic effects were not perceived as evangelical tools but primarily as aesthetic objects (pp. 269–271, 273). Quoting Jiang Shaoshu 姜紹書 (d. 1680), Liu Tong 劉侗 (1593–1637), and others, Wang states that Chinese literati were conscious of the "supposed 'superiority of painting techniques' as reflected in icons" which led "first to an esteem for the physiognomy of European images (*europäische Bildphysiognomie*) and second to the resistance against the classical canons of Chinese painting" (p. 271). With the arrival of Giuseppe Castiglione (Lang Shining 郎世寧, 1688–1766) in China, perspectival and illusionistic frescoes turned the Jesuit *Wunderkammern* with their displayed curiosities into an "aesthetic-playful experience space" (*ästhetisch-spielerischer Erlebnisraum*) and "picture buildings" (*Bilderbauten*).[6]

In *The Jesuits' Legacy*, picture buildings are not only understood as places of encounter in the physical sense but also as "transgressive spaces for linkages of all genres—from event-specific palace rooms to diplomatic negotiation rooms and spaces of imperial representation in Beijing and [Chengde]" (p. 280). Wang's central argument is that the emergence of Jesuit picture buildings in Beijing enabled processes of transculturation in which the Qianlong Emperor (r. 1735–1796) ended up employing picture buildings himself for the "intended

[6] The term initially referred to the monumental decoration of Roman churches in the Baroque period and was introduced by German art historian David Ganz in his *Barocke Bilderbauten: Erzählung, Illusion und Institution in römischen Kirchen 1580–1700* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2003).

manipulation of the observing subject" as well as the "formation and display of the Manchu I through the rhetoric of the technically advanced Other" (p. 281). With other words: an emerging "Europerie" (what Wang calls the "counterpart" [*Pendant*] to Chinoiserie" in Europe) in China allowed Qianlong to display his "knowledge of domination" (*Herrschaftswissen*) (pp. 33–34).[7] For example, Wang argues that painterly simulated architecture, first encountered in fake domes in the South and East churches, found its way into simulated architecture at the court of Qianlong (pp. 281–289).[8] For Wang, the transfer of such ideas from Jesuit churches to imperial palaces transformed Qianlong's palaces into "baroque-like picture palaces" (p. 289). The author uncovers other examples of Europerie that were used for Manchu self-construction. Amongst these, he analyses the pictorial use of Christian high-altar architecture in a Manchu princely portrait (pp. 295–299) and the use of animal portraits (discussed more in detail below) as examples of the transfer of ideas which helped to foster "transcultural power dreams at the time of Emperor Qianlong" (p. 317). Overall, Wang argues that transcultural encounters of the time were predominantly shaped by the Jesuits, which is important to note since "the Jesuit perspective of seeing was [...] influential in nearly all aspects of Chinese court art [during the eighteenth century]" (p. 326).

Chapter Five is based in part on a previously published article.[9] It discusses the role of Beijing's Jesuit gardens in their transcultural unfolding as carriers of

7 The term Europerie was first coined in the aesthetic sense of the word by Bruno Kisch to describe European porcelain designs at the Qing court. See Bruno Kisch, "Europerien auf China-Porzellan," *Artibus Asiae*, 6:3/4 (1937), pp. 272–282. As Mungello observes, it was taken up by George N. Kates also in this sense, while Wang Lianming uses the term in a political sense. See Mungello's aforementioned book review, p. 291.

8 Kristina Kleutghen has already described these transfers of ideas in her *Imperial Illusions: Crossing Pictorial Boundaries in the Qing Palaces* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015), pp. 171–172.

9 [Wang Lianming], "From La Flèche to Beijing: The Transcultural Moment of Jesuit Garden Spaces," in Anna Grasskamp and Monica Juneja, eds., *EurAsian Matters: China, Europe, and the Transcultural Object, 1600–1800* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2018), pp. 101–123.

meaning, places of knowledge, and arenas for display, which implies a large field of enquiry. The chapter's first part analyses the North Church's parterre garden. Using a painting of the North Church in the collection of the Bibliothèque nationale de France as his main source of information, Wang asserts that the four-part garden visualized the French king's absolute power over the four continents and "fabricated a symbolic, constant [French] royal presence in the North Residence in Beijing" (p. 349). The chapter's second part shifts attention to the garden as a nodal point for global knowledge transfer: not only were the Jesuits keen to collect and catalogue Chinese plants to be sent back to Europe, but they also cultivated dried plants from Europe that were, in turn, planted both in the Jesuit and imperial gardens in Beijing. Highly instrumental in this exchange was Pierre Nicolas d'Incarville (Tang Zhizhong 湯執中, 1706–1757), who was not only interested in Chinese plants but also presented the Qianlong emperor with mimosas (which Castiglione painted in his *Time-Telling Plant from the West*; *Haixi zhishi cao tu* 海西知時草圖) (pp. 355–360).

The last part of chapter five looks at Chinese encounters with fountains and hydrology in the Jesuit gardens. In the changing positioning of the role of water, Wang sees a subtle yet crucial moment in which European ideas of "landscape" and Chinese ideas of mountain-and-water (*shanshui* 山水) started to converge when Chinese views of nature through a scene (*jing* 景) were questioned and challenged through encounters with European sciences and linear perspective (p. 369). From 1747 to 1759, Qianlong built European-style buildings, the Xiyang lou 西洋樓, in the northeastern part of Yuanmingyuan 圓明園 (Garden of Perfect Clarity, sometimes also referred to as the Old Summer Palace). Portable stage architecture employed throughout the city at the occasion of imperial birthday celebrations in 1751 and 1791 made this European-style architecture, together with its fountains, accessible to Beijing's population (p. 370). Wang sees in this theatrical staging a pivotal moment at which a shift in visuality occurred and

argues that the depiction of waterplays and fountains had a crucial role in this development. Perceptively, Wang observes that painterly perspectival visions were often foregrounded by a European fountain; particularly well-known are the copperplate engravings *Twenty Views of the European Palaces of the Yuanmingyuan* (1786) by Ilantai 伊蘭泰 (fl. 1749–1786). But Wang also finds other examples in a court clock, a hand-colored woodblock print, and Buddhist paintings by Ding Guanpeng 丁觀鵬 (fl. 1726–1771) (pp. 371–377, 401–402). Comparing these to "traditional" modes of water portrayal in album leaves by Shao Mi 邵彌 (ca. 1592–1642) and Tang Dai 唐岱 (1673–1754), Wang argues that water became a primary element for the perspectival construction of a landscape in the Western sense of the term and, as "part of the country," a "singular object of contemplation" that could represent the territory of the Manchu state (pp. 375–401).

Well-researched and richly illustrated, *The Jesuits' Legacy* greatly fosters our awareness for the global entanglements of Jesuit art and architecture in novel ways and contributes to current debates of global art history. But in his efforts to reveal the pivotal role of the Jesuits' churches in Beijing, Wang sometimes neglects Chinese domestic traditions of image-making and display that, if discussed, could have made for a more complex argument. This is particularly the case in chapter four in which the author discusses images of tribute dogs and horses, amongst others. From 1747 to 1748, when the Qianlong emperor was suppressing the Tibetans militarily, Castiglione painted the monumental series *Ten Prized Dogs* (*Shi jun quan tu* 十駿犬圖) that showed tribute dogs presented to the throne by the Dzungars, Mongols, Tibetans, and others. Wang sees the precedent for this series in Castiglione's slightly earlier monumental series *Ten Steeds* (*Shi jun tu* 十駿圖) from 1743, which aimed to represent tribute horses from the Western regions in life-size depictions (pp. 303–312).

Through written travel accounts, Wang traces the appearance of a dog and horse in the frescos of the South Church, the life-likeness of which astonished the recording Korean envoys (pp. 302–303, 312–313). He compares the account, in which the horse is described as having its "head turned backwards, as if it were running," to one of the horse paintings from the *Ten Steeds* series and comes to the conclusion that the frescoed horse appeared in "nearly identical pose" to one of the paintings in Castiglione's monumental hanging scroll series (p. 313). By doing so, the author implies a compositional origin for Castiglione's monumental hanging scroll series in Beijing's South Church. This is a compelling argument which can enhance our understanding of the role of Beijing's Jesuit spaces in transcultural processes. However, the reader could have benefited from a more whole-sided discussion. First, the dog and the horse series differ markedly as the dog paintings contain a painted background which the horse paintings do not (as Wang himself notes). Given the long tradition of depicting horses in only fine brush lines without decorative backgrounds, compositional precedence for Castiglione's hanging scrolls is certainly also located in China's domestic horse painting traditions.[10] Wang alludes to this when he states that it might have been possible that the Qianlong Emperor made *Six Noble Steeds from the Zhaoling Mausoleum* (*Zhaoling liu jun tu* 昭陵六駿圖) by Zhao Lin 趙霖 (fl. ca. 1161–1189) available to Castiglione (p. 316).[11] Indeed, Castiglione was highly familiar with China's horse painting tradition and must have known about its appropriation and transformation at the Qing court to build a cultural and political legacy. This can clearly be inferred from the many horse paintings such as *One Hundred Horses* (*Bai jun tu*

10 One example of a horse painting in which the animal is depicted without a background is Han Gan's 韓幹 (fl. ca. 742–756) *Night-Shining White* (*Zhaoye bai tu* 照夜白圖), which bears an inscription by the Qianlong Emperor dated to 1746–1747, close in time to the making of Ten Steeds in 1743.

11 It is doubtful whether the Qianlong Emperor made Zhao Lin's painting available to Castiglione. The emperor's frontispiece and preface to Zhao Lin's scroll are dated to the first month of the winter of the *wuxu* 戊戌 year, that is 1778—twelve years after Castiglione's death in 1766.

百駿圖, 1728) which he did at the court prior to his monumental *Ten Steeds* series.[12] Paintings of tribute dogs from the Western regions can also be traced back to earlier times. They were produced in the Song dynasty (960–1127) and continued to be made in the Ming dynasty when the Xuande Emperor (r. 1426–1435), also known as Zhu Zhanji 朱瞻基 (1399–1435), painted two foreign tribute dogs in 1427.[13] The latter painting was well-known to the Qianlong Emperor as his many collector seals on the leaf make abundantly clear. The compositional origins for Castiglione's paintings can thus also be found in China's domestic painting tradition.

Wang goes on to observe the unusual monumentality of the horse project, noting that with the exception of Northern Song monumental landscapes, the display of mobile, life-size formats of painting had not been standard practice in China (p. 312). Looking for an explanation, he reads the monumental nature of Castiglione's horse scrolls as a redeployment of ancient Song formats and as a *translatio loci* that connected the horse series to a room painted with life-sized horses in the Palazzo del Te in Mantua, close to Castiglione's hometown of Milan (p. 316). Somewhat provocatively, he writes that "the *Sala dei Cavalli* served as a

12 For a discussion of the One Hundred Horses scroll as an allegory of empire, see Ma Ya-chen 馬雅貞, "Qingdai gongting hua ma yuhui de zhuanhuan yu yiyi: cong Lang Shining de Bai jun tu tan qi" 清代宮廷畫馬語彙的轉換與意義——從郎世寧的《百駿圖》談起, *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊, 27:3 (2010), pp. 103–138. Chen Yunru has also discussed the use of European painting techniques in horse painting as a means to depict ideal rulership. See Chen Yun-ru 陳韻如, "Zhizuo zhenjing: chonggu 'Qing yuan ben Qingming shanghe tu' zai Yongzheng chao huayuan zhi hua shi yiyi" 製作眞境：重估〈清院本清明上河圖〉在雍正朝畫院之畫史意義, *Gugong xueshu jikan* 故宮學術季刊, 28:2 (2010), pp. 21–27. See also Cheng-hua Wang, "One Painting, Two Emperors, and Their Cultural Agendas: Reinterpreting the Qingming Shanghe Painting of 1737," *Archives of Asian Art*, 70:1 (April 2020), pp. 95–96.

13 For an illustration of Ai Xuan's 艾宣 (fl. eleventh century) album leaf "Tribute 'Ao' Mastiff from Lü in the West" (Xi lü gong ao 西旅貢獒), e.g., see Fang-Ju Liu 劉芳如 and Shu-Fang Cheng 鄭淑方, eds., *Sifang laichao: zhigong tu tezhan* 四方來朝——職工圖特展 (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2019), p. 78. For Zhu Zhanji's album leaf "Two Saluki Hounds" (Xuanhua shuang quan tu 萱花雙犬圖), see object number 1931.20, Harvard Art Museums, https://hvrd.art/o/209917 (accessed July 31, 2023).

model for Qianlong's monumental animal scrolls" (p. 10). While his argument is well-taken and furthers our understanding of transcultural adoptions from Italy to China, it would have been informative to learn how exactly Castiglione had access and knowledge of that room. Also, during the reigns of the Kangxi and the Yongzheng (r. 1722–1735) emperors, mobile monumental hanging scrolls had been in use at the court, of which the two most prominent examples may well be *View of Rehe* (*Bishu shanzhuang tu* 避暑山莊圖) by Leng Mei 冷枚 (fl. 1677–1742) and Castiglione's *Gathering of Auspicious Signs* (*Ju rui tu* 聚瑞圖) from 1723.

And so the book occasionally gives the impression that Wang's focus on processes of transculturation leads him to neglect domestic traditions surrounding the making and display of pictures. This is, for example, also the case when he cites Jiang Shaoshu, Liu Tong, and others in order to state that Chinese literati were conscious of the "supposed 'superiority of painting techniques' as reflected in icons" (p. 271) without mentioning counter-voices defending Chinese painting techniques such as Wu Li 吳歷 (ca. 1632–1718) or Zou Yigui 鄒一桂 (1686–1772). It might also have been fruitful to think about Castiglione's scrolls in relation to Ming-period hanging scrolls of giraffes, for example. While these were not as large as Castiglione's horse paintings, their auspicious subject matter gestured towards Heaven's approval for the rule of the Yongle Emperor (r. 1402–1424) and their display—probably for people who had witnessed the arrival of these tribute animals at court[14]—visualized claims of Ming suzerainty over various quarters of the world. These scrolls operated similarly to Castiglione's dog and horse paintings, which, according to Wang, were "an instrument of hegemony to propagate a panasiatic, multicultural empire under the rulership of Qianlong" (p. 34).

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14 Kathlyn Liscomb, "How the Giraffe Became a *Qilin*: Intercultural Signification in Ming Dynasty Arts," in Jerome Silbergeld and Eugene Y. Wang, ed., *The Zoomorphic Imagination in Chinese Art and Culture* (Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2016), p. 360.

It is a pity that *The Jesuits' Legacy* neglects to take Chinese domestic practices of painting and display into deeper consideration as they would have helped the reader to understand more clearly the rich and multilayered ideological and political implications of Castiglione's scrolls. This is not to say that Wang's argument is not compelling: in the dog and horse series, two different traditions of display, understanding, and conventions of interpretation certainly merged as the author himself notes (p. 316). Wang provides a captivating explanation for the sudden appearance of such monumental scrolls, but discussing these in a more rounded fashion would not have distracted from his reading of the works' transcultural entanglements. In chapter five, the author better resists such a temptation as he reconstructs Chinese domestic traditions of the portrayal, significance, and ideologies of water.

One of the many pleasures of this book are its manifold illustrations, especially of floor plans and architectural drawings sourced from museums and archives from around the world. They give testimony to the depth of Wang's research and make many of his excellent analyses understandable even for non-architectural historians. Unfortunately, translations are provided without the relevant Chinese passages and the book relies exclusively on transcriptions of Chinese writing without a character list. Overall, this publication provides a fascinating perspective on Beijing's Jesuit architecture. It contributes to our comprehension of the global entanglements of Qing art, and, as art historian Patricia Berger once put it, to our understanding of the "complexity of production at the Qianlong court."[15]

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15 Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China* (Honolulu: Hawai'i University Press, 2003), p. 7.